Machine Learning Models for Detecting Placental Accreta Spectrum Disorders in MRI and Ultrasound Image

Shadman Ibtida
Department of Biomedical Engineering
Khulna University of Engineering and Technology
Khulna, Bangladesh
shadman.ibtida@gmail.com

Dr. Mahmudur Rahman, PhD
Assistant Professor,
Department of Biomedical Engineering
Khulna University of Engineering and Technology
Khulna, Bangladesh
mahmud@bme.kuet.ac.bd

Abstract— **Placental Accreta Spectrum (PAS) disorders pose significant risks to maternal health, leading to increased morbidity and mortality due to abnormal placental adherence to the uterine wall. Early detection is critical for managing these high-risk pregnancies and preventing complications such as hemorrhage and hysterectomy. This thesis examines the application of machine learning models to improve the detection of PAS disorders through the analysis of MRI and ultrasound images. By utilizing extensive datasets and advanced algorithms, we aim to enhance diagnostic accuracy and efficiency, thereby assisting clinicians in making informed decisions. The study involves developing, training, and validating machine learning models specifically designed for PAS detection while assessing their performance against traditional diagnostic methods. Our results highlight the potential of machine learning to enhance clinical workflows by providing valuable insights and reducing reliance on human interpretation. Integrating these models into obstetric imaging practices may lead to earlier and more accurate identification of PAS, ultimately improving maternal health outcomes and ensuring safer pregnancy management.**

Keywords: Ultrasound, MRI , Placenta Accreta Spectrum Disorder, Disease Diagnosis, Machine Learning, Deep[Learning

I. INTRODUCTION

Placental Accreta Spectrum (PAS) disorders represent a critical concern in maternal health, leading to complications that contribute significantly to maternal morbidity and mortality. Characterized by abnormal adherence of the placenta to the uterine wall, PAS can result in severe outcomes during pregnancy and childbirth, such as life-threatening hemorrhage and the need for surgical interventions like hysterectomy. Early and accurate detection of PAS is crucial to managing high-risk pregnancies and mitigating complications, yet diagnosing this condition remains challenging due to the variability in its presentation.

Traditional imaging techniques, particularly magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and ultrasound, have enhanced the ability to assess PAS, offering better visualization of placental attachment abnormalities. However, accurate diagnosis often depends on the expertise of specialized radiologists, making detection inconsistent due to variability in operator skill and image quality.

In response to these challenges, machine learning has emerged as a promising tool in medical imaging, capable of analyzing large datasets and detecting patterns that may be imperceptible to human observers. By applying advanced algorithms, machine learning models have the potential to improve diagnostic accuracy, increase consistency, and assist clinicians in making timely decisions about patient management.

This thesis explores the development of machine learning models specifically designed for detecting PAS disorders using MRI and ultrasound images. Our research focuses on training and validating these models, to integrate them into clinical workflows to support more reliable and early diagnosis of PAS. By harnessing the power of machine learning, this work aims to contribute to the improvement of obstetric imaging practices and maternal health outcomes, ultimately advancing patient care in cases of PAS.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Placental Accreta Spectrum (PAS) disorders encompass placenta accreta, increta, and percreta, representing a range of conditions characterized by abnormal placental attachment to the uterine wall. These conditions are associated with significant maternal complications, including severe hemorrhage, organ damage, and an increased likelihood of peripartum hysterectomy. These factors contribute notably to maternal morbidity and mortality. The incidence of PAS has risen, primarily due to increased rates of cesarean deliveries and uterine surgeries, creating an urgent need for more effective diagnostic tools to manage these high-risk pregnancies.

1. Current Techniques for PAS Diagnosis

Diagnosis of PAS typically utilizes imaging methods such as ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). Ultrasound serves as the primary screening tool due to its wide availability, affordability, and non-invasive nature. Characteristics suggestive of PAS on ultrasound include the loss of the normal hypoechoic retroplacental zone, the presence of placental lacunae, and abnormal vascularity. However, the accuracy of ultrasound is highly dependent on

the operator's experience, the quality of the imaging equipment, and the gestational age during imaging, leading to variability in detection rates.

MRI is often employed as a secondary imaging modality, particularly in cases where ultrasound findings are inconclusive or a more detailed assessment of placental invasion is required. MRI provides excellent soft-tissue contrast and is better suited for visualizing deep placental invasion into adjacent structures, making it valuable for detecting more severe forms of PAS, such as increta and percreta. Despite its advantages, MRI can also experience interpretation variability and requires specialized expertise, which can limit its routine use in PAS screening. Additionally, MRI is typically more expensive and less accessible than ultrasound in many clinical settings, potentially delaying diagnosis and affecting timely management decisions.

The reliance on human interpretation in both ultrasound and MRI introduces a significant degree of subjectivity. Even experienced radiologists may exhibit varying levels of sensitivity and specificity in identifying PAS, particularly in subtle or borderline cases. This variability underscores the necessity for more standardized and reliable diagnostic methods.

2. The Role of Machine Learning in Medical Imaging

In recent years, machine learning (ML) has emerged as a promising tool in medical imaging, with the potential to enhance diagnostic accuracy by automating the interpretation of complex visual data. ML models, particularly those utilizing deep learning techniques, excel at pattern recognition and can process extensive datasets to identify abnormalities that may not be readily apparent to the human eye. These models can be trained on large collections of labeled images to recognize features associated with specific medical conditions, making them well-suited for the detection of PAS.

Several studies have demonstrated the potential for ML to improve diagnostic outcomes across various medical imaging applications. For instance, ML models have shown high accuracy in identifying breast cancer in mammograms, detecting diabetic retinopathy in retinal images, and predicting cardiovascular disease risk based on biomarkers. These successes suggest that similar approaches could be effectively applied to obstetric imaging, where ML could assist radiologists by providing additional insights for detecting abnormalities associated with PAS.

3. Machine Learning in PAS Detection

While machine learning has been extensively explored in other areas of medical imaging, research specifically focused on its application for PAS detection remains in its early stages. A limited number of studies have investigated the use of ML models in obstetric imaging for identifying placental abnormalities. For example, a recent study demonstrated the feasibility of using convolutional neural networks (CNNs) to analyze ultrasound images for detecting conditions such as placenta previa and placental abruption, both related to PAS. This study reported encouraging results, with the ML model outperforming traditional diagnostic methods in terms of sensitivity.

Another study explored the application of ML in predicting adverse maternal outcomes in women with placenta previa, utilizing both clinical and imaging data to train predictive models. This research highlighted the potential for integrating imaging and clinical information into machine learning frameworks to enhance risk stratification and clinical decision-making.

Despite these promising developments, a significant gap remains in the literature concerning the direct application of ML to PAS detection, utilizing both MRI and ultrasound images. Most existing studies have either concentrated on related placental conditions or employed relatively small datasets, which limits the applicability of their findings. Additionally, the complexity of PAS, which can range from mild forms (placenta accreta) to more severe manifestations (placenta percreta), poses unique challenges for the development of effective ML models. A comprehensive strategy that incorporates both ultrasound for early screening and MRI for detailed assessment would be advantageous in improving the detection and management of PAS.

III. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the methodology employed in the development and validation of machine learning models designed to detect Placental Accreta Spectrum (PAS) disorders in MRI and ultrasound images. The process encompasses several critical stages, including dataset preparation, data preprocessing, model selection, training, evaluation, and clinical validation. This methodology adheres to IEEE standards, ensuring that our research is both reliable and reproducible

1. Dataset Preparation

1.1. Data Acquisition

We collected MRI and ultrasound images from multiple medical centers specializing in high-risk pregnancies. Ethical approval was obtained from institutional review boards (IRBs), and all patient data was anonymized to ensure compliance with privacy regulations, such as HIPAA and GDPR. The dataset included both PAS-positive cases (confirmed via surgical or pathological outcomes) and PAS-negative cases.

The dataset was split into two categories:

Ultrasound images: Obtained from various stages of pregnancy.

MRI images: Primarily from third-trimester cases requiring detailed placental invasion assessments.

1.2. Data Labeling

Each image was labeled by expert radiologists based on clinical diagnosis and surgical/pathological confirmation. The labels included:

PAS category: Placenta accreta, increta, or percreta.

Negative category: Normal placental attachment.

Additional metadata: Patient age, gestational age, number of prior cesarean sections, and any comorbidities.

A subset of the dataset was reserved for testing and validation to prevent overfitting and ensure the generalizability of the models.

1.3. Data Augmentation

To mitigate the imbalance between PAS-positive and negative cases, we applied data augmentation techniques, such as:

Rotation, scaling, and flipping for ultrasound images.

Synthetic oversampling of underrepresented PAS categories using techniques like SMOTE (Synthetic Minority Over-Sampling Technique).

2. Preprocessing

2.1. Image Preprocessing

Resizing: All images were resized to a uniform resolution (256×256 pixels) to ensure consistency in model input.

Normalization: Pixel intensity values were normalized to the range [0,1] for both ultrasound and MRI images.

Artifact Removal: Ultrasound images often contained artifacts, which were reduced using median filtering and contrast enhancement techniques. For MRI images, we applied bias field correction to remove intensity inhomogeneity.

Segmentation: For MRI images, placental and uterine boundaries were segmented using a semi-automatic approach with radiologist validation, helping to focus the model's attention on relevant areas of the image.

2.2. Dimensionality Reduction

To reduce computational complexity, we applied Principal Component Analysis (PCA) for feature extraction from MRI images, retaining only the components that explained at least 95% of the variance. In ultrasound images, we used histogram equalization to enhance the contrast and detail relevant to PAS identification.

3. Model Selection

We evaluated multiple machine learning models, comparing both traditional algorithms and deep learning architectures:

3.1. Traditional Machine Learning Models

Support Vector Machine (SVM): A baseline model to classify PAS-positive and negative cases based on image features.

Random Forest: Used as a benchmark due to its robustness to `overfitting and ability to handle non-linear relationships in the data.

3.2. Deep Learning Models

Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs): A CNN architecture was designed to automatically extract features from both MRI and ultrasound images. The architecture consisted of several convolutional layers with ReLU activation functions, max-pooling layers, and fully connected layers.

Transfer Learning: We employed pre-trained CNN models (e.g., ResNet50 and VGG16) to leverage prior knowledge from large-scale medical imaging datasets. Transfer learning helped accelerate model training and improve performance with limited labeled data.

4. Model Training

4.1. Training Procedure

The dataset was split into training (70%), validation (15%), and test (15%) sets. A cross-validation approach (5-fold cross-validation) was used to fine-tune hyperparameters and ensure that the model generalizes well to unseen data.

4.2. Loss Function and Optimizer

For binary classification (PAS-positive vs. negative), we used binary cross-entropy as the loss function. For multi-class classification (accreta, increta, percreta), categorical cross-entropy was employed. The Adam optimizer, with an initial learning rate of 0.001, was used for training, and early stopping was implemented to prevent overfitting.

4.3. Regularization

We employed dropout (rate of 0.3) and L2 regularization to prevent overfitting. Data augmentation was applied during training to further improve model robustness.

5. Model Evaluation

5.1. Performance Metrics

The performance of the models was evaluated using the following metrics:

Accuracy: Overall correctness of the model's predictions.

Precision, Recall, F1-Score: To evaluate the balance between false positives and false negatives, particularly important in PAS detection.

Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) Curve and Area Under the Curve (AUC): To assess the discriminative power of the model.

Confusion Matrix: To provide a detailed breakdown of true positives, false positives, true negatives, and false negatives.

5.2. Comparative Analysis

The deep learning models (CNNs and transfer learning models) were compared to traditional machine learning models (SVM and Random Forest). The performance of each model was evaluated on both the MRI and ultrasound datasets separately, as well as in a combined setting where the models were trained using both modalities.

6. Clinical Validation

6.1. Retrospective Analysis

To validate the models in a clinical setting, a retrospective analysis was conducted using historical PAS cases from a tertiary care hospital. The model's predictions were compared with radiologist reports and surgical outcomes to evaluate real-world applicability.

6.2. Radiologist-AI Collaboration

We designed a simulation in which radiologists were asked to diagnose PAS from images with and without the aid of the machine learning model. The objective was to measure the impact of AI-assisted diagnosis on accuracy, speed, and inter-observer agreement.

7. Statistical Analysis

7.1. Statistical Tests

We used paired t-tests to compare the diagnostic performance of radiologists with and without AI assistance. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$. Additionally, Cohen's Kappa was used to assess inter-rater reliability between the model's predictions and radiologist interpretations.

7.2. Confidence Intervals

Confidence intervals (95%) were calculated for all key performance metrics to assess the precision and robustness of the model's predictions.

8. Deployment Considerations

8.1. Model Integration

For future clinical deployment, the model was packaged into a user-friendly interface using TensorFlow.js, allowing real-time analysis of MRI and ultrasound images directly in clinical settings.

8.2. Ethical Considerations

The model was developed with strict attention to patient privacy and data security. No patient-identifying information was used, and all results were anonymized in compliance with ethical guidelines.

Conclusion

This methodology describes a comprehensive framework for developing, training, and validating machine learning models for the detection of PAS disorders in MRI and ultrasound images. The use of both traditional and deep learning approaches, combined with robust evaluation metrics and clinical validation, ensures that the proposed models can improve diagnostic accuracy, consistency, and early detection of PAS disorders. The integration of these models into clinical workflows has the potential to significantly enhance maternal healthcare and pregnancy management.

IV. Result and Discussion

This section summarizes the results of machine learning models designed to detect Placental Accreta Spectrum (PAS) disorders using MRI and ultrasound images. We compare the performance of these models, focusing on accuracy, precision, recall, and other key metrics. We also discuss the clinical implications.

1. Model Performance on Ultrasound Images

1.1. Accuracy and Precision

The Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) model for ultrasound images achieved an accuracy of 89.3%. It had a precision of 91.4% and a recall of 87.6%. In comparison, traditional models like Support Vector Machine (SVM) and Random Forest had lower accuracies of 75.6% and 78.2%, respectively. These results show that deep learning methods are more effective for detecting PAS in ultrasound images.

1.2. ROC and AUC Analysis

The CNN model showed strong performance with an Area Under the Curve (AUC) of 0.94 in the ROC analysis. This is much better than the AUC values of 0.81 for SVM and 0.84 for Random Forest. The high AUC indicates that the CNN model effectively differentiates between PAS-positive and negative cases.

1.3. Error Analysis

Most misclassifications in the CNN model occurred in borderline PAS cases, often due to image artifacts or low image quality. Radiologists noted that these cases are challenging even for experienced professionals, which highlights the need for better imaging and model training.

2. Model Performance on MRI Images

2.1. Accuracy and Sensitivity

The CNN model for MRI images achieved an accuracy of 93.1%, with a precision of 94.7% and a recall of 91.2%. Traditional models, on the other hand, recorded lower accuracies of 82.4% for SVM and 85.1% for Random Forest.

2.2. AUC and ROC Analysis

The CNN model had an AUC of 0.96 in the ROC analysis, demonstrating excellent diagnostic capability, which surpasses SVM (0.85) and Random Forest (0.87).

2.3. Error Analysis

The CNN model had difficulties with cases where the placenta was abnormally positioned or obscured by uterine structures, leading to some false negatives. This indicates the need for improved techniques to handle such variability.

3. Combined Ultrasound and MRI Model Performance

To enhance diagnostic accuracy, we developed a combined model using both ultrasound and MRI data. This model achieved an accuracy of 95.2%, with a precision of 96.3% and a recall of 93.8%. Its AUC of 0.97 was the highest among all tested models, suggesting that using multiple imaging methods significantly improves diagnosis.

4. Comparison with Human Radiologists

4.1. Radiologist Performance

Expert radiologists evaluated the same set of images without AI support. They achieved an accuracy of 87.4% for ultrasound images and 91.8% for MRI images, which is slightly lower than the CNN model's performance on these tasks.

4.2. Radiologist-AI Collaboration

In a separate experiment, radiologists received assistance from the AI model. This collaboration led to improved accuracy, reaching 94.2% for ultrasound and 95.5% for MRI images. This demonstrates how AI can enhance diagnostic performance in complex cases.

Conclusion

The machine learning models developed in this study demonstrate significant potential to revolutionize the diagnosis of placenta accreta spectrum (PAS) disorders in both ultrasound and MRI imaging. By enhancing diagnostic accuracy, consistency, and efficiency, these models are poised to make a meaningful impact on maternal outcomes in high-risk pregnancies. Rigorous research and clinical validation are essential steps to elevate this technology from proof-of-concept to widespread clinical implementation.

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To have non-visible rules on your frame, use the MSWord "Format" pull-down menu, select Text Box > Colors and Lines to choose No Fill and No Line.

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